

Spring 1-15-2003

ENG 4903-001: Young Adult Literature

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Spring 2003
Office Hours: M+F 11-12, T+R 1-2
& by appointment
Website: www.eiu.edu/~childlit

English 4903 (01): Young Adult Literature
MWF 1:00-1:50 in Coleman Hall 3160

Textbook: *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, 6th edition (2001),
ed. Donelson & Nilsen

Trade Books: *The Chocolate War*, Cormier (1974)
The Goats, Cole (1987)
Am I Blue?, ed. Bauer (1994)
An Island Like You, Ortiz Cofer (1995)
The Golden Compass, Pullman (1996)
Twelve Shots, ed. Mazer (1997)
Holes, Sacher (1998)
Rules of the Road, Bauer (1998)
Monster, Myers (1999)
Gold Dust, Lynch (2000)
Big Mouth and Ugly Girl, Oates (2002)

ASSIGNMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

In this class, we will explore the range of literary works in English written for “young adults” (approximately ages 12 – 18). Assigned and self-selected readings will expose you to novels, stories, and poems that reflect a range of time periods and cultural perspectives. Class discussions, individualized writing assignments, group projects, and oral presentations will focus on critical analysis of the literary qualities of these works. We will also give significant attention to the more practical but equally critical evaluation of their pedagogical usefulness and developmental appropriateness. And we will consider the ways these novels, stories, and poems reveal social attitudes and diverse authorial slants on teenagers and the world they live in. By the end of this course, you should have a working knowledge of Young Adult literature and a sense of where it is going and where it has been. If we do it right, you should also read some books you enjoy and do some interesting and important thinking about adolescence and literature. Writing assignments will range from informal responses to book reviews to formal essays or papers. Students taking this course for graduate credit will complete a research project and present the results at the EIU English Conference Saturday, April 26.

Note: This is a “writing-intensive” course, which means that you can revise at least one piece of writing to submit to the Electronic Writing Portfolio.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND POLICIES

- 1.) You must complete all major assignments to pass this course. Late work will be penalized unless we come to an understanding *before* the due date, so keep in touch! If you are experiencing temporary difficulties, contact me as soon as possible so we can work something out.
- 2.) Attendance counts. Participation too. If you have more than four (4) *un-excused* absences, you will lose most of your participation points.
- 3.) Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's words or ideas and using them in your own writing or presentations without giving credit (written or oral) to their author. This is a serious academic offense and could result in a failing grade for the plagiarized paper or this course and could also incur other university penalties. At the very least, any paper with citation problems will have to be revised before it can receive a grade. Tutors in the Writing Center (down the hall in CH 3110) can answer questions about how to document sources in papers you write for this class or others. Drop by or call (581-5929) to make an appointment if you want to work with a tutor at any point in the writing process, from brainstorming and planning to editing and documentation. The Writing Center is open 9 a.m.– 3 p.m. + 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; Friday hours are 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- 4.) Formal writing assignments should be double-spaced and typed, using MLA-style documentation. Informal responses may be hand written (one side of page only).
- 5.) Students with documented disabilities: please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) soon so we can work out appropriate accommodations.

Young Adult Literature: *Where Are We Going? Where Have We Been?*

Tentative Schedule of Readings & Assignments (**bold dates** indicate group presentations)

Week 1

- 1/13 Introductions + YA Book Tasting
1/15 Begin *Monster* (1-80); Notecard with passage + question/comment DUE
1/17 *Monster* (80-200)

Week 2

- 1/20 MLK, Jr. Holiday ~ *no class meeting*
1/22 finish *Monster* (200-281); Write-up + Annotation DUE (see *Lit* 314-318)
1/24 "Young Adults & Their Reading" (*Lit* chapter 1: 1-41)

Week 3

- 1/27 "YA Literature, Pop Culture, and the Mass Media" (*Lit* 3: 78-108)
Bring a list of specific examples of works in various media that were part of your life as a teen. Your list could include books (including comic books & graphic novels), movies, magazines, movies, TV shows (cartoons, dramas, sitcoms, news programs...), web-sites, etc.
1/29 "A Brief History of Adolescent Literature" (*Lit* 2: 43-74)
Meet in Coles Ballenger Teachers Center at Booth Library
1/31 Begin self-selected reading; 250-word response to first third of book DUE

Week 4

- 2/3 Response to end of book DUE
2/5 Annotated Research/Reviews + Response DUE
2/7 Draft Review Essay DUE (see *Lit* 318-321)

Week 5

- 2/10 "The New Realism: Of Life and Problems" (*Lit* 4: 113-142)
2/12 Review Essay DUE
2/14 Lincoln's Birthday Holiday ~ *no class meeting*

Week 6

- 2/17 Read four stories (groups assignments TBA) in *Am I Blue?*
2/19 Read two more stories + "On Gay Books" (*Lit* 292-293)
Write-up + Annotation DUE
2/21 Read four stories in *An Island Like You*

Week 7

- 2/24 "Deciding on the Literary Canon" & "Teaching Ethnic Literature" (*Lit* 322-330); Write-up + Annotation DUE
2/26 Read four stories in *Twelve Shots* + "On Short Stories" (*Lit* 364);
2/28 "Censorship: Of Worrying and Wondering" (*Lit* 12: 390-430), especially boxed author statements on 394-5, 402, 416;
Write-up + Annotation DUE

Week 8

- 3/3 Begin *The Goats* (1-47); Final drafts of 1st four write-ups DUE
3/5 *The Goats* (48-149)
3/7 Finish *The Goats* (150-189); Write-up + Annotation DUE

Spring Break

Week 9

- 3/17 “The Old Romanticism: Of Wishing and Winning” (*Lit* 5: 144-172)
3/19 Begin *Rules of the Road* (1-45)
3/21 Continue *Rules of the Road* (46-132)

Week 10

- 3/24 Finish *Rules of the Road* (133-201); Write-up + Annotation DUE
3/26 Begin *Holes* (3-54)
3/28 *Holes* (55-151)

Week 11

- 3/31 Finish *Holes* (152-233); Write-up + Annotation DUE
4/2 “Adventure, Mysteries, the Supernatural, and Humor” (*Lit* 6: 175-207)
4/4 “Fantasy, Science Fiction, Utopias, and Dystopias” (*Lit* 7: 210-232)

Week 12

- 4/7 Begin *The Golden Compass* (3-58)
4/9 *The Golden Compass* (finish Book I: 59-140)
4/11 *The Golden Compass* (Part II: 143-265) ~ no class meeting

Week 13

- 4/14 Finish *The Golden Compass* (Part III: 269-351);
Write-up + Annotation DUE
4/16 “History and History Makers” (*Lit* 8: 236-269)
4/18 Begin *Gold Dust* or self-selected book;
Response to first third DUE

Week 14

- 4/21 Response to rest of book DUE
4/23 Annotated Research/Review(s) DUE & Write-up + Annotation
4/25 Log DUE (last 5 Write-ups + other writing); Grad Student Presentation(s)

Saturday 4/26 EIU English Conference

Week 15

- 4/28 Begin *Big Mouth & Ugly Girl* (1-66)
4/30 *Big Mouth & Ugly Girl* (67-169)
5/2 Finish *Big Mouth & Ugly Girl* (170-266)

5/6 Final Exam 12:30 – 2:30